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OSCE
SUBJECT: DEPUTY SECRETARY STEINBERG'S DECEMBER 1, 2009
CONVERSATION WITH TURKISH FOREIGN MINISTER DAVUTOGLU

Classified By: Carol Fuller, Charge d, Affaires. Reason 1.4.(d)

- [1](#)1. (U) Cleared by Deputy Secretary Steinberg
- [1](#)2. (U) December 1, 2009; 5:30 pm; Athens, Greece.
- [1](#)3. (U) Participants:

U.S.
The Deputy Secretary
EUR Assistant Secretary Philip Gordon
Jeff Hovenier, NSC
Jim Kuykendall (Notetaker)

OTHER COUNTRY
Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu

[1](#)4. (C) SUMMARY. In a meeting that lasted over one hour, FM Davutoglu was almost exclusively interested in discussing the MAP accession prospects for Bosnia. Deputy Secretary Steinberg made it clear that the United States would need to see more progress from all parties before we would support extending MAP. Davutoglu was insistent that Turkey could bring the Bosniak parties together and the Deputy Secretary proposed that we work on a common approach, with the EU and Spain, to try and push for real progress on measures to improve the functioning of the Bosnian government in the next 2-3 months. The Deputy raised the topic of Iran and said he hoped Turkey would be a supportive actor in what were sure to be a critical next few months. The principals also briefly discussed the Minsk Group meeting and the Ministerial Statement on Nagorno-Karabakh, noting their agreement on the positive direction the negotiations seem to be heading. END SUMMARY.

BOSNIA

- [1](#)5. (C) In a frank but cordial exchange which took up the vast majority of the meeting, FM Davutoglu was insistent that Bosnia be extended MAP at the December NATO Ministerial. He argued that:
- All the major parties involved (Bosnia, Croatia, and even Serbia) have no objection to extending MAP to Bosnia.
 - While constitutional reform is a must, extending MAP to Bosnia is the best way to incentivize the needed reforms.
 - The U.S. and Europe brought Bosnia into the UNSC and that after 15 years and the horrible suffering the Bosnians have endured, we are punishing them by not extending MAP.
 - Turkey could bring the Bosniak parties together if MAP was

to be extended at the December NATO Ministerial.

¶16. (C) Deputy Secretary Steinberg, however, asserted that the administration sees the situation in Bosnia differently from Turkey. He noted:

- If NATO offers MAP to Bosnia now, there will be no incentive left with which to push for further reforms.
- Reform in Bosnia will be a step-by-step process, and so far the parties have not even taken the first step of coming to the table.
- The Bosniaks are not even talking among themselves, but that if they could reach a common position, there would be some pressure that could be applied to Dodik.
- The bottom line is that the Bosnian leaders want others to solve their problems so they don't have to do the hard work or take any political risk to solve their own problems themselves, and the U.S. won't support that mentality.
- The President has been clear on our position, which is that the reform and MAP process is not compensation for their past suffering, and that all the parties must show signs of progress before the U.S. will support MAP for Bosnia.
- The best chance for MAP for Bosnia was this spring, and that it was not realistic to expect such an important decision, which would need to be made by the President, to come together in the next 48 hours.

¶17. (C) A/S Gordon added that extending MAP to Bosnia would be asking MAP to take on more than it could bear (compensating Bosniaks for their losses in the war). If Bosnia were to get MAP now, everyone would be happy for a very short time, but ultimately none of the problems would be solved and the biggest incentive we have would be gone.

¶18. (C) Looking forward, the Deputy Secretary proposed that
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at the NATO Ministerial, allies welcome Bosnia's interest in MAP and state that they hope to see serious attempts by all parties to agree on steps to improve the functioning of the government before an invitation to MAP be extended to Bosnia.

He suggested that after the Ministerial, we identify a common approach to dealing with all the parties in Bosnia, get the EU and Spain on board, and try to work on real progress in the next 2-3 months.

¶19. (C) In response to Davutoglu's question about the specific conditions were under which the U.S. would support MAP for Bosnia, D(S) made clear that the U.S. wanted to avoid setting specific benchmarks, but that the parties all needed to come to the table and begin discussing the proposed reforms in order for us to support MAP. Ultimately, all of the reforms proposed so far are in the best interests of all the parties involved.

¶10. (U) Both Davutoglu and the Deputy Secretary agreed that working closely together on Bosnia is essential.

IRAN

¶11. (C) The Deputy Secretary raised the issue of Iran and noted that we are moving into a very important period of time in dealing with their nuclear program. He said the President remains hopeful that his overtures will produce results, but at the same time, this waiting game cannot go on forever. By the end of the year, if there is still no progress, he said the U.S. would have to go in another direction and he hoped Turkey would be a supportive actor.

¶12. (C) Davutoglu said that President Ahmadinejad told the Turkish Government that he had sent three offers to the White House through secret channels.⁸ He also relayed his impression that Ahmadinejad believes in the sincerity of President Obama, but that he is very unhappy that the U.S. sends sanctions proposals to Russia, France, and others. The Deputy underscored that to his knowledge, no such channels had been established.

¶13. (C) Davutoglu emphasized that we need to deal with Iran

discreetly, and that the carrot and stick method would only work behind the scenes. He warned that if we threaten publically, Iran would follow suit. The Deputy Secretary countered that the U.S. had been negotiating for 11 months, and tried for nine months to negotiate discreetly. He noted that the President showed agreement in principle to an approach that was extremely generous to Iran.

¶14. (C) The Deputy Secretary said that the IAEA Board of Governors resolution in Vienna was a shot across the bow and in explaining the Turkish abstention on that resolution vote, Davutoglu said he agreed in substance with the resolution, but not on its timing. Davutoglu also said that Turkey is supposed to meet with Iran again in January to discuss new ideas, and he hoped we would wait to see the outcome of those meetings.

OSCE Minsk Group Decision- Nagorno-Karabakh Process

¶15. (C) Both principals agreed that the OSCE Ministerial Statement, which stated that the Nagorno-Karabakh process be governed by the Helsinki Principles, was a positive step. Davutoglu said that while publically the message has been that there is no linkage between Nagorno-Karabakh resolution and Turkey-Armenia normalization, there is a linkage in reality, specifically where Turkey's Parliament is concerned. He said that it would be important for the U.S. to push all sides but that now is the time for progress. The Deputy Secretary reiterated that the U.S. does perceive a large stake in all of these negotiations, and believes there are lots of positive opportunities for Turkey, Armenia, and Azerbaijan in these discussions.
FULLER